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adamantine volumes, stamped in perishable clay, painted in the darkness of the tombs, or cut on mountain side, bring impartial, unimpeachable, and conclusive proof of the veracity of the Old Testament."

GEORGE L. ROBINSON.

MCCORMICK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
Chicago, Ill.

A History of New Testament Times in Palestine 175 B. C.—70 A. D.

By SHAILER MATHEWS, M.A., Professor of New Testament History and Interpretation in the University of Chicago.
"New Testament Handbooks," edited by Shailer Mathews.
New York: The Macmillan Co., 1899. Pp. 218. \$0.75.

This is a most readable and interesting book. The history of the Jewish people in Palestine from 175 B. C. to 70 A. D. is told in a clear and picturesque way, and the reader, whether the story be old or new to him, is bound to follow it from beginning to end. The important points stand out with due prominence and clearness, and the result is a total impression that is at once vivid and accurate. Professor Mathews is eminently qualified to produce such a book. He knows the age familiarly, he is well versed in the sources, and he has the gift, all too rare among scholars, of telling a story simply, clearly, and briefly, without reducing its interest and without sacrificing any of its essential features. This gift stands him in good stead in the present small volume, where the limitations of size imposed by the plan of the series as a whole make rigid condensation necessary. An excellent example of clear and yet condensed statement is found in chap. vi, which contains an account of the origin of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. The following brief description of Pharisaism is worth quoting: "The indispensable element of Pharisaism is its insistence upon righteousness through obedience to Jehovah's law, and upon the withdrawal from everything that might defile. In personal life it led to isolation from the common people —'âm ha-'ârets — to repeated washings of the hands, persons, dishes, and utensils. In thought it led to infinite devotion to details and preternaturally refined distinctions and warnings. In religion it led to the formation of a fraternity, a church within a church, composed of 'neighbors' who were exclusively scribes, and who were admitted by the laying on of hands. In politics it led to a determination to make Judea complete in itself—an isolated religious commonwealth, as far as possible removed from the contamination of heathen life."

The thirteenth chapter, entitled "The Messianic Hope and Jesus the Messiah," is another admirable example of brief and telling characterization. The following pregnant sentence may be taken as an illustration: "From the start the movement was messianic, but Jesus was more concerned to show that the Messiah was such as he than to show that he was the Messiah."

It is a peculiarly difficult and delicate matter to deal with the work of Jesus in a single chapter in a history of the Jewish people, but Professor Matthews has treated the subject in an admirable spirit, and the chapter is marked by uncommon self-restraint, freedom from prejudice, and simplicity and directness of statement. The following passage could not well be improved upon: "For, as the Messiah, he was something more than a teacher—he was a Life. It was his consciousness of divine sonship that had led him to undertake the messianic work of establishing God's kingdom, and it was the same consciousness that gave him his power of inspiring a few men with an undying loyalty to himself. As a teacher of ethics he could do little more than restate, though with astonishing simplicity and force, the great principles already taught by the Hebrew prophets; but as the Messiah he founded the kingdom of God by compelling men who could not understand him or his ideals to love him, and grow to be like him, the ideal of the kingdom."

"From the beginning of his preaching in Galilee, Jesus was a popular hero. His sweetness of temper, the authority and attractiveness of his teaching, his undisguised sympathy with the despised masses, his superiority to religious superiors, his philanthropy, the very mystery in his messianic character—all brought thousands to him."

Professor Matthews' book is somewhat disappointing in one respect. It does not enter as fully as one might wish into the conceptions and institutions of the Jews in the time of Christ and his apostles. Incidentally, in connection with the story of events, much light is thrown upon those matters, but in a series like the present, in which an understanding of the New Testament is the main object in view, it seems as if the history of external events might well have been somewhat abbreviated in order to leave more room for the portrayal of the manners and customs and ideas of the Palestinian Jews of Christ's own day. As a history of the Jews it is all that could be desired, and the title exactly describes the book; but as a picture of the environment of the New Testament it seems a little meager. But the book is by the editor of the series, and was of course written with the needs of the

series as a whole in mind; and so we may fairly conclude that it is the intention to make good the apparent lack at the point indicated, in other volumes of the series.

Altogether the present work is to be most heartily commended to all that wish to know the course of Jewish history during the eventful period with which it deals; and that means to all students of the New Testament, for the work of Christ and his apostles can be understood only when viewed in its setting in the life of the people from whose bosom they came.

We cannot close this brief notice without expressing our warm admiration for the series of New Testament handbooks of which this volume is a part. It is remarkable to see so high a standard of scholarship maintained in a series of small books designed for popular use. The editor has been exceedingly fortunate in securing the coöperation of genuine scholars, who have evidently spared no pains to make their respective volumes thoroughly trustworthy and up to date.

ARTHUR C. MCGIFFERT.

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

Christianity in the Apostolic Age. By GEORGE T. PURVES, D.D., LL.D., recently Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis in Princeton Theological Seminary. With maps. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900. Pp. ix+343. \$1.25.

The second volume in the New Testament division of the admirable historical series for Bible students, edited by Professors Sanders and Kent, is by Dr. George T. Purves, recently professor of New Testament interpretation in the Princeton Theological Seminary. While the Old Testament volumes of the series represent somewhat advanced critical positions, this volume of Professor Purves represents extreme conservatism. There is, in fact, almost no suggestion made by so-called scientific theology which the author has not rejected—even to the extent of clinging to the north-Galatian hypothesis of Lightfoot. To many persons this will doubtless appear a genuine virtue. Such readers, however, will find the older work of Conybeare and Howson more interesting as well as more complete. Dr. Purves' critical position is utterly unaffected by recent works upon the apostolic age. In his opinion every writing of the New Testament from Romans to Second Peter is authentic; the book of Acts is an authority of the first order, written throughout by Luke, though with the use of